



**Tipperary**  
**ETB**

Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna Thiobraid Árann  
Tipperary Education & Training Board

# **Academic Misconduct Procedure**

(for Further Education and Training)

Version 1.0

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## Academic Misconduct Procedure

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## Definitions

<b>Academic Integrity*</b>	is the commitment to, and demonstration of, honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting. It is compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices and consistent system of values, that serves as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship’.
<b>Academic Misconduct*</b>	covers all actions which contravene academic integrity. Academic misconduct is any attempt by someone to seek unfair advantage in relation to academic activity or which facilitates others to gain an unfair advantage, or to profit from the sharing or selling of your own or others’ work without permission.
<b>Artificial Intelligence</b>	refers to systems that display intelligent behaviour by analysing their environment and taking actions – with some degree of autonomy – to achieve specific goals. AI-based systems can be purely software-based, acting in the virtual world (eg voice assistants, image analysis software, search engines, speech and face recognition systems) or AI can be embedded in hardware devices (eg advanced robots, autonomous cars, drones or Internet of Things applications).” <sup>1</sup>
<b>Blackmail*</b>	where there is a demand for payment or favours from a learner in return for keeping their purchase of an assignment which has been submitted to their institution, secret.
<b>Bribery*</b>	the offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for action.
<b>Cheating*</b>	actions that attempt to get advantage by means that undermine values of integrity.
<b>Coercion*</b>	using force, intimidation, authority or persuasion to compel a person(s) to author work for a learner which is subsequently submitted to the institution as that learner’s own work without acknowledging the author’s work.
<b>Collusion*</b>	undisclosed collaboration of two or more people on an assignment or task, which is supposed to be completed individually.
<b>Contract Cheating*</b>	form of academic misconduct when a person uses an undeclared and/or unauthorised third party, online or directly, to assist them to produce work for academic credit or

<sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Artificial Intelligence for Europe, Brussels, 25.4.2018 COM(2018) 237 final.

	progression, whether or not payment or other favour is involved.
<b>Data Fabrication*</b>	making up data and presenting that data as genuine.
<b>Data Falsification*</b>	data falsification or falsification of data is the unjustified manipulation of research data with the intention of giving a misleading impression.
<b>Essay mill*</b>	an organisation, or individual, usually with a web presence, that contracts with students to complete an assignment or assignments for the student, for a fee.
<b>File-sharing sites</b>	<p>an online platform that enables the distribution and access to digital media, such as documents, audio, images, videos, and other electronic files. These websites facilitate the private or public sharing of resources with either the general public or a network of authenticated users who are required to log in.</p> <p>There may be legal and/or security issues when accessing file sharing sites, as the material available may be copyrighted, pirated, and/or contain malicious viruses. A file-sharing site is not classed as AI.</p>
<b>Intentional Cheating*</b>	intentional action or behaviour that violates established rules and gives one student an unfair advantage over another.
<b>Impersonation*</b>	<p>undertaking in whole or in part any work required as part of a programme in the place of an enrolled learner, without permission from the provider.</p> <p>Sitting an exam, or having someone else sit an exam in place of an enrolled learner, without permission of the provider.</p>
<b>Misrepresentation*</b>	misrepresentation is any act or omission that is intended to deceive.
<b>Plagiarism*</b>	presenting work/ideas taken from other sources without proper acknowledgement.
<b>Research Integrity</b>	means conducting research in such a way that allows others to have confidence and trust in the methods and the findings of the research. It relates both to the scientific integrity of conducted research and to the professional integrity of researchers <sup>1</sup> .
<b>Research Misconduct*</b>	is providing false or incomplete information in research.

\* The above definitions are taken from [National Academic Integrity Network: National Principles and Lexicon of Common Terms](#); Published by Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI), September 2021 (1st edition).

<sup>1</sup> Taken from: Edinburgh Research Office: [What is research integrity? | Edinburgh Research Office](#)

## Acronyms

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<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>ETB</b>	Education and Training Board
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>NAIN</b>	National Academic Integrity Network
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>QQI</b>	Quality and Qualifications Ireland

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## 1. Introduction

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These procedures have been developed to guide FET centres and staff, and, investigation teams and committees on how to manage suspected cases of academic misconduct. The information in this document is closely aligned to the guidelines contained in the National Academic Integrity Network's (NAIN) - [Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management](#), 2023 and [Academic Integrity Guidelines](#), 2021.

This document should be read in conjunction with Tipperary ETB's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- Aid staff in detecting and recording suspected cases of academic misconduct
- Outline the steps involved in carrying out an investigation process
- Outline how academic misconduct investigations and evaluations should be managed to include principles of investigation and other considerations
- Aid the assessor, the centre-based investigation teams and the ETB's Academic Integrity Committee to classify academic misconduct and apply the appropriate sanctions.

### 1.2 Scope

This document applies to FET programmes which lead to the making of awards or qualifications. This includes any 2<sup>nd</sup> Providers or third parties under the governance and oversight of Tipperary ETB and any other collaborative arrangements that involve the assessment of learners.

It also applies to all forms of assessment including centre-based, work-based and online and includes examinations and course assessments such as projects, assignments.

While the detail in this procedure is primarily designed to manage misconduct in modules that are assessed for a numerical mark, cases of academic misconduct may occur in assessments in modules where there are no marks awarded, and only grades (successful or not). In such cases where academic misconduct is found to have occurred, outcomes may be appropriately decided for such cases.

### 1.3 Responsibilities for Implementation

Responsibilities for implementation of this procedure are as follows:

- **Assessors** have responsibility for detecting and highlighting learner misconduct and promptly escalating to the Centre's Academic Investigation Team for suspected misconduct
- **Centre Management** are responsible for enabling assessors to detect, investigate and report academic misconduct.
- The **Centres' Academic Investigation Team** is responsible for conducting a prompt and fair investigation process and providing learner well-being and support throughout the investigation. The Centre's Investigation Team is also responsible for escalating serious cases of misconduct to Tipperary ETB's Academic Investigation Committee.
- **Tipperary ETB's Academic Investigation Committee** is responsible for reviewing serious cases of misconduct. They also review appeals made by learners.
- The **FET QA Office** monitors this procedure to ensure its continual effectiveness. The FET QA office also is responsible for supporting centres with local investigation processes as well as appointing and supporting the ETB's Academic Committee.
- The FET **Senior Management Team (SMT)** is responsible for oversight of this procedure and noting cases outcomes from ETB's Academic Integrity Committee.

#### 1.4 Other Relevant Policies, Procedures, Guidelines

- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Artificial Intelligence Guidelines](#)
- [Examinations Procedure](#)
- [Research Integrity Policy](#)

## 2. Forms of Academic Misconduct

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Academic misconduct is any attempt to gain or help others gain an unfair academic advantage. Academic misconduct can be either intentional or accidental.

There are many forms, including:

- Submitting work as your own for assessment, which has, in fact, been done in whole or in part by someone else or submitting work which has been created artificially, eg, by a machine or through artificial intelligence. This may be work completed for a learner by a peer, family member or friend or which has been produced, commercially or otherwise, by a third party for a pre-agreed fee (contracted); it may be work in which the learner has included unreferenced material taken from another source(s) (plagiarism); it may be use of a ghost writer to carry out assessed work



which is then submitted as the learner's own work; it may be using a previous assignment as submitted by a peer claiming it to be your work; it may be that references have been falsified to give credibility to the assignment and to show evidence of research; it may be a claim for authorship which is false

- Cheating in exams (eg cheat sheets, copying, using disallowed tools, impersonation)
- Cheating in projects (eg collusion; using 'essay mills' to carry out allocated parts)
- Selling or simply providing previously completed assignments to other learners
- Misrepresenting research (eg data fabrication, data falsification, misinterpretation)
- Bribery ie the offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for an action
- Falsification of documents
- Improper use of technology, laboratories, or other equipment
- Helping a peer or learner to do their assignment which develops into the helper doing some or all of the assignment
- Sharing or selling staff or institutional intellectual property (IP) with third parties without permission. (NAIN, 2021,p.11).

Some additional examples of academic misconduct are:

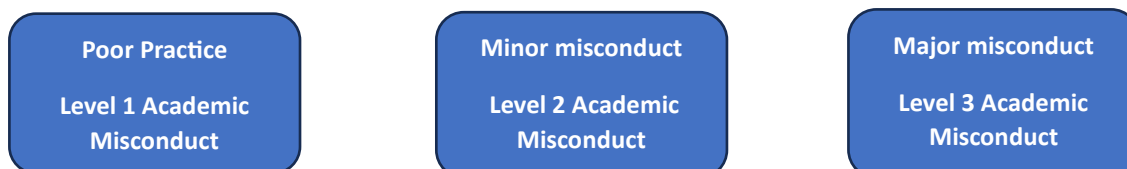
- Reuse of previous work without permission
- Promoting ways to breach academic integrity

**Note:** Academic misconduct can arise as a result of poor academic practice or poor understanding of academic integrity expectations.

### 3. Types of Academic Misconduct

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Tipperary ETB adopts NAIN's broad academic-misconduct classification as follows:



The most serious breaches are those that fall into level 3, (eg contract cheating, fraud, impersonation) whilst the least serious (eg careless referencing, minor plagiarism) align to level 1 misconducts. The outcomes for learners are aligned to the extent and seriousness of misconduct found.

## 4. Detection and Initial Investigation of Academic Misconduct

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### Live assessments

Assessment misconduct during live examinations is handled promptly by the invigilator and managed according to the Examinations Procedure. Examination breaches should be recorded on the [Report of Module Assessment Report](#) (ie invigilators report) and should be subsequently investigated by the Centre<sup>2</sup>. The centre should be guided by the information within this document to determine the form and classification of misconduct and the appropriate sanction (eg exam cheating is not a level 1 misconduct as the act is deliberate).

### Coursework, projects, assignments

Where the assessor is not able to directly observe or verify the work-in-progress and/or has a suspicion that academic misconduct has occurred, there are a range of checks that the assessor can do to check for authenticity and reliability of the submitted learner evidence.

### **Initial checks**

- Use of technological tools or technical checks eg antiplagiarism software, document properties etc
- Evaluate the assessment evidence for clues and patterns eg check language use, referencing styles and patterns, adherence to the assessment brief. Use the matrix in [Table 1 to support the evaluation of evidence](#) located in the appendices
- Deviance from classwork
- Use learner notes, logs, diaries etc
- Comparison against initial assessments completed eg English language assessment, induction writings
- Check learner's draft work and previous assessor feedback given
- Compare learner assessment work with previous assessments
- Conversation with the learner about the assessment writing process and content eg Why did you chose this topic? Did you get help from anyone? On which platform did you write this essay? Whose computer did you use? See more suggested questions [Table 1 to support the evaluation of evidence](#) located in the appendices
- Has learner completed academic integrity education and training? Has the learner signed declaration of own work? Has the learner signed the Academic Code of Conduct?<sup>3</sup>
- Opinions of other teachers of the learner

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<sup>2</sup> Where there is not a physical centre, 'centre' should be taken to mean programme

<sup>3</sup> This may help work out if the learner has made a deliberate attempt to deceive or cheat, or if it's a result of carelessness, or genuine lack of understanding or application academic skill.

- NFQ Pathways taken by the learner/qualifications
- Independent testimonies of third party assessors
- Peer reports (for group assessments)
- Has there been official reports or complaints by others about learner academic practice?
- Any other additional or alternative historical data?

One or two signals alone do not provide enough evidence to substantiate misconduct but can provide reason for further investigation.

The initial assessor review should be able to ascertain, in some objective manner:

- the extent and seriousness of the breach
- whether it is intentional or accidental

**Note:** the willingness of the assessor to escalate is significant to maintain a culture of academic integrity. The experience and expertise of the assessor is recognised in making an early and initial academic judgement of misconduct.

## 5. Procedure For Full Investigation, Classification and Sanctioning of Academic Misconduct

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A full investigation is required in cases where the initial investigation has shown that:

- The assessor’s initial review suspects academic misconduct
- Learner evidence cannot be verified with confidence by the assessor following initial review and evaluation.

### Procedures

#### Step 1: Appoint a Centre<sup>4</sup>-based Academic Investigation Team

- The team should consist of a minimum of 2 centre staff<sup>5</sup> who are independent of the matter being investigated. Ideally, the head of the investigation-team should be the Head of Centre or programme (to bring consistency to the centre’s practice).

<sup>4</sup> Where there isn’t a physical centre base, interpret centre as ‘programme’

<sup>5</sup> In cases where programme staff are limited, the centre investigation-team membership can come from other staff eg assessor/coordinator from another centre, member of FET OA office, FET Senior Manager etc

## Step 2: Notify learner

- Notify the learner that academic misconduct is suspected and further investigation by the FET centre will take place.
- Team-based centre investigations should take place within **5 working days** following the assessor's referral.

## Step 3: Meet with learner

- Carry out an interview with the learner. The goals of the meeting are to:
  - Ascertain learner familiarity with the contents of the assignment and the assessment-writing process.
  - Check academic integrity understanding – have they completed academic integrity education and training? Have they been told the rules and expectations for that assessment?
  - Check academic integrity skills – do they know how to correctly reference?
  - Provide opportunity for learner to provide explanations – the original suspicion may arise from initial evidence but during the conversation it may become apparent that lack of understanding is the issue.
- Ideally, there should be a minimum of one teacher of the learner involved, plus another staff member so that they can build an informed opinion as well as share questioning and note-taking. One of the interviewers must be familiar with the assessment and subject matter and the areas of concern.
- Draw from the sample questions supplied in [Table 1](#) in the appendices; add further questions relevant to context.
- Document the meeting for future reference or onward referral. A sample [Template for Conducting Learner Academic Integrity Interview](#) is provided in the appendices.
- Offer the learner the opportunity to bring a support person to the meeting (eg a peer learner, learner rep from centre/ETB student council). This person may not participate in the interview or speak on the learner's behalf and must not under investigation themselves. Learners that have specific support needs may be granted reasonable accommodations for this process.

**Note:** The interviewers are not members of the Centre-based Academic Investigation Team but do contribute to the investigation process.

## Step 4: Investigate and examine

- Convene a meeting of the Centre's Academic Investigation Team to examine and investigate evidence and records.

- Hear and/or view the report(s) - oral, written – of assessor who detected the case. Hear from the interviewers and learner.
- Examine the assessment evidence and online materials including any information from detection-software available.

**Note:** One or two signals do not provide enough evidence to confirm misconduct so look carefully at each aspect of the assessment and other assessment-related documents and any other relevant sources of evidence. Identify all aspects that are cause for concern. Three forms of evidence are critical:

- a) Textual and electronic evidence. Use [Table 1](#) to help identify textual signals (supplied in the Appendices)
  - b) Knowledge of the learner’s academic and linguistic abilities
  - c) Learner’s previous assessment work
- Is there evidence of inconsistency between learner interview answers and textual/electronic/documentary evidence?

### Step 5: Decide the form of misconduct

- Determine form of academic misconduct as:
  - Plagiarism
  - Self-plagiarism
  - Contract cheating (eg essay mills)
  - Misuse of AI
  - Collusion
  - Non-compliance with assessment/exam regulations
  - Cheating eg exam cheating
  - Impersonation
  - Fraud/data fabrication or falsification
  - Reuse of previous work
  - Use of file-sharing sites
  - Misrepresentation
  - Unauthorised content generation
  - Promoting ways to breach academic integrity
  - Other

[Definitions](#) of each are provided at the start of this document

### Step 6: Evaluate the evidence

- Complete the [points-based scoring matrix is in appendix C](#) to help the investigation team assess and determine misconduct severity.
- Agree an overall score relative to the misconduct.

## Step 7: Consideration of other factors

Consider and discuss any other relevant factors, for example:

- if the learner admits to the misconduct\*
- if this was a first or repeat offence\*
- the nature of the alleged misconduct eg a poor approach to referencing versus contract cheating
- the learner's stage in the programme or academic advancement
- the assessment modality
- the weight of the assessment
- if the assessment was low or high-stakes
- whether the module or programme leads directly to professional practice or professional registration
- any extenuating circumstances
- other relevant contextual factors

\*the scoring tool accounts for these considerations

## Step 8: Determine the appropriate sanction/outcome

Determine the sanction for the misconduct using the [Outcomes Calculator](#). At minimum, learners are obliged to participate in academic integrity re-training and the record is held on the Academic Misconduct Register.

**Note:** Objectively weigh up all the evidence. Determine whether it is more likely than not that misconduct has taken place.

**Note:** Evaluate based on the actions of the learner rather than submission of a defence of not intending to engage in misconduct.

**Note:** the scoring matrixes supplied provide an points-driven and objective method of aiding the decision-making process. However, it is important to note that this model should be used as assistive tool, rather than as definitive and prescriptive. The final decision and sanction should consider contextual factors as part of the process.

**Note:** A single entry of inadvertent minor plagiarism on the Academic Misconduct Register will not be considered a 'first offence' in the process. Point out to the learner and record for future reference. The next time, it is counted as assessment malpractice and sanctioned accordingly.

**Note:** Use common sense and experience. Use experience of previous academic integrity cases, if relevant.

**Note:** Use [Academic Integrity Policy](#). Use ETB supports structures eg FET QA Office, TEL support, FET Senior Manager.

### Step 9: Record, retain and report

- Complete [An Academic Integrity Investigation Report](#).
  - Level 1 case records - retain locally in centre
  - Level 2 case records – retain locally in centre, forward a copy of the final Investigation Report to Tipperary ETB’s QA Office
  - Level 3 case records – retain locally in centre, retain a copy of the Investigation Committee’s final report
  - Enter into Academic Misconduct Register.
- All records must be securely stored with authorised staff access only.
- Report commercial contract cheating companies/opportunities to the FET QA office or directly to QQI: [academicintegrity@qqi.ie](mailto:academicintegrity@qqi.ie)

### Step 10: Inform the learner of the outcomes

The Centre’s Academic Investigation Team informs the learner, in writing, and **within 2 working days** if misconduct was found or not.

- If misconduct was not found, the learner is informed and a brief reasoning for this conclusion is provided.
- If Level 1 or 2 misconduct was found, the notification should include:
  - The sanction that will be applied, with a brief reasoning
  - That it will enter the learner’s record
  - The learner appeals process, if the learner does not accept the decision and sanction. [Learner Appeal Form](#) – See Appendix G.
- If Level 3 misconduct was found, the notification should include:
  - That serious misconduct was determined with a brief reasoning and the case is being referred to the Tipperary ETB Academic Investigation Committee for review and sanction.
  - That Tipperary ETB’s Academic Investigation Committee will be in contact with the learner.

**Note:** Where necessary, a retrospective investigation can take place, including following completion of an academic programme and/or the granting of an award to a learner.

### Step 11: Referral to Tipperary ETB’s Investigation Committee

The Centre’s Investigation Team should refer the case to Tipperary ETB’s Academic Investigation Committee **within 5 working days**. All learner evidence, centre records and reports should be included.

The referral can be sent to the ETB’s FET QA Office.

#### Procedure for Centre’s Investigation process: Summary

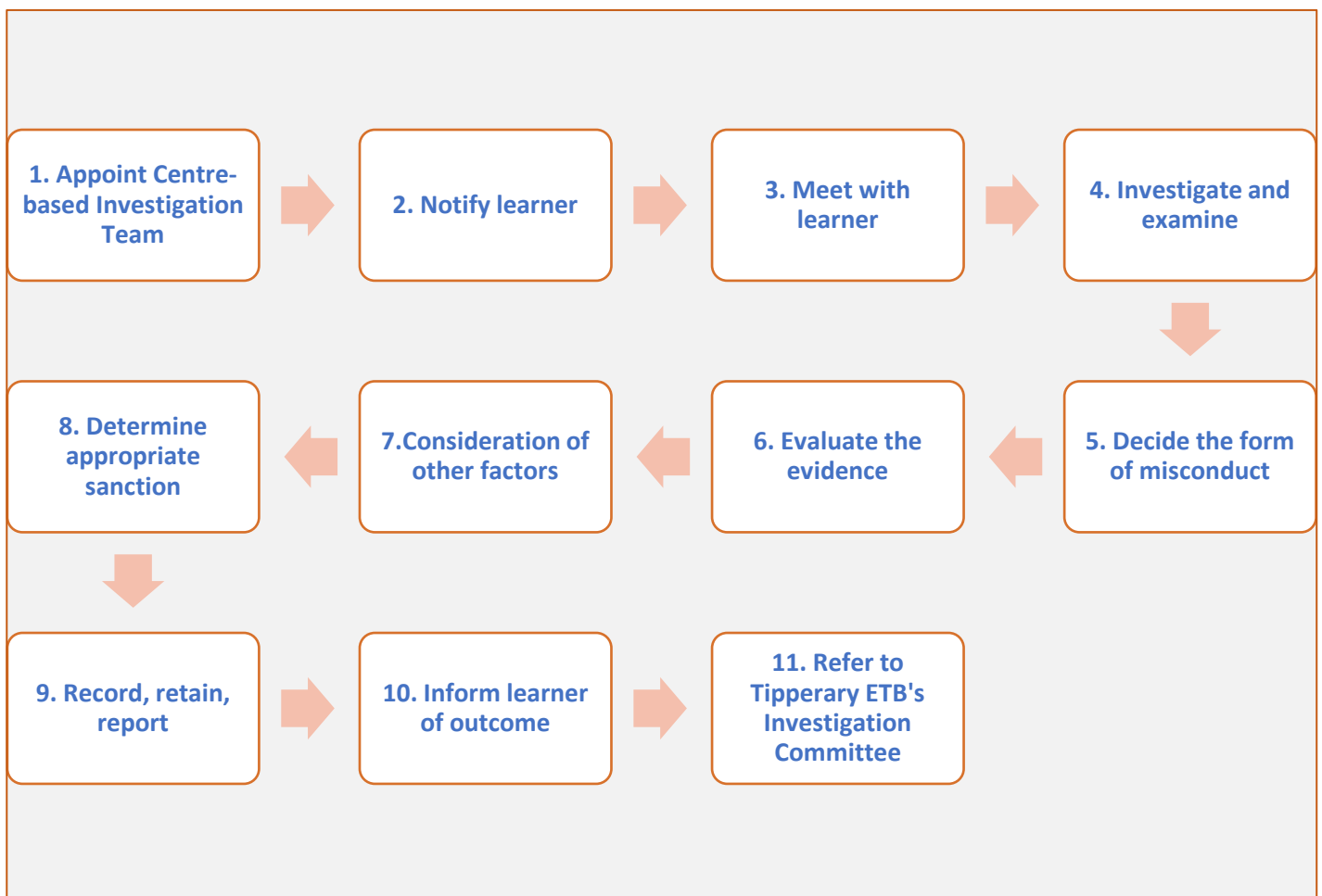


Figure 1: Summary of Centre-based Investigation process



## Procedure for Suspected Academic Misconduct: Summary

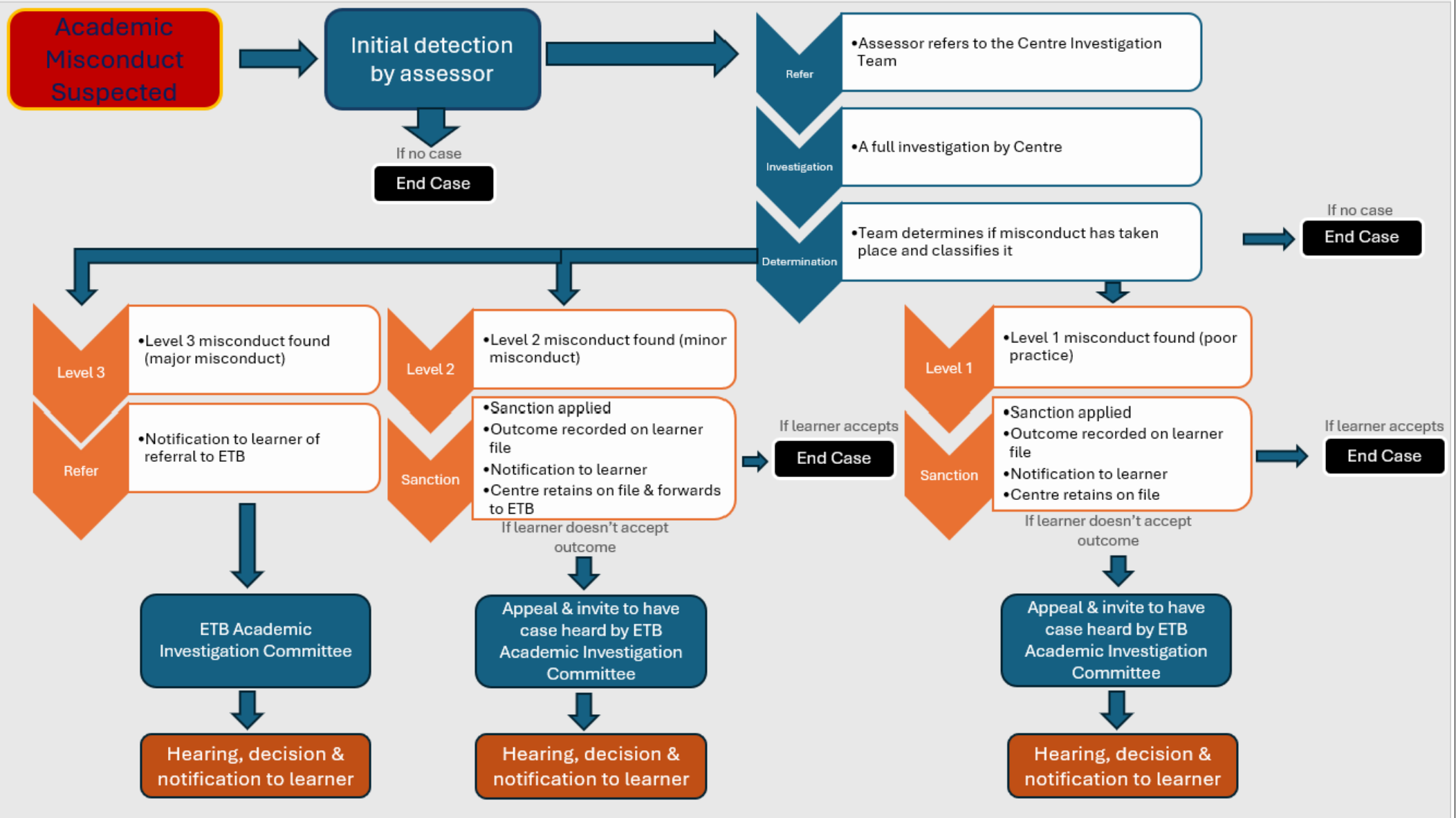


Figure 2: Procedure for Suspected Academic Misconduct: A summary

## 6. Principles of Investigation

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At all stages of investigation be guided by the following:

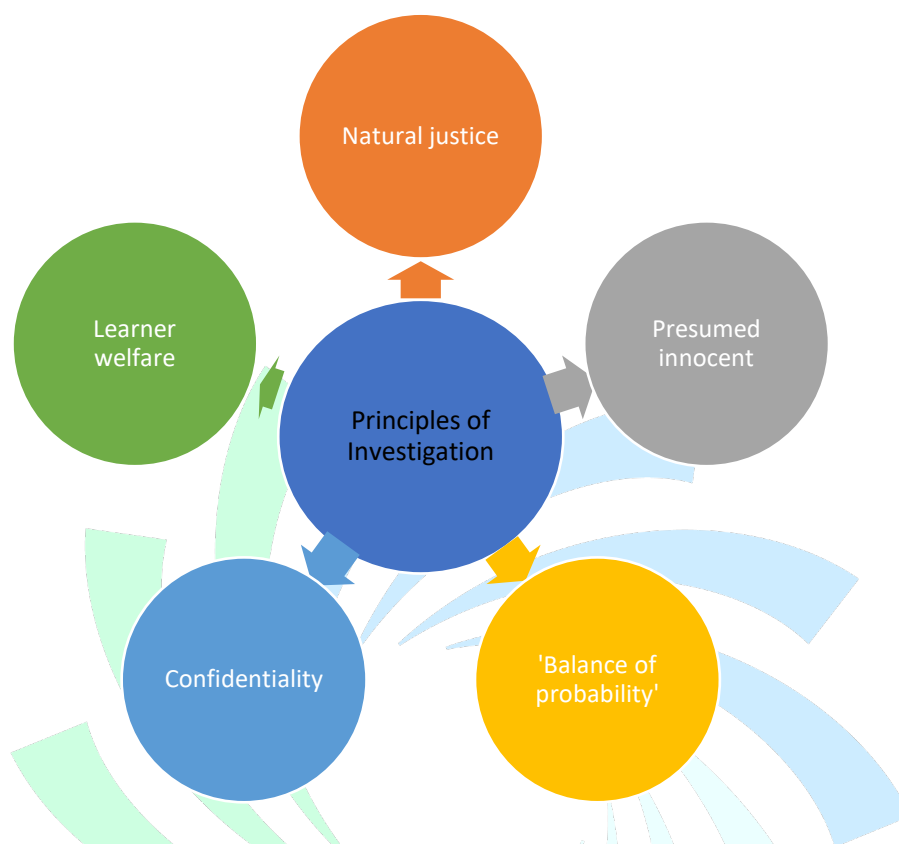


Figure 3: Principles of Investigation

**Ensure natural justice:** Ensure the learner is supported in this process and not disadvantaged.

Learner is **presumed innocent** until proven otherwise through investigation.

**Use 'balance of probabilities' not 'beyond doubt':** The accepted standard of proof is that the decision maker is satisfied, based on clear and convincing evidence, that it is more likely than not, that the academic misconduct has taken place.

**Confidentiality** during the investigation process, information should be shared only with those who have a role in the investigation process. However, learners may need to be informed that outcomes may need to be shared with others eg awarding body, other staff.

**Learner welfare:** learner well-being should be at the heart of any investigation. Investigations may yield information which may prompt the need for referral to appropriate support services.

## 7. Procedure and Terms of Reference For Tipperary ETB's Academic Investigation Committee

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- The FET QA Office appoints the Tipperary ETB's Academic Investigation Committee.
- Appointment is as follows:
  - Fixed chair: is the FET Senior Manager with responsibility for QA.
  - Minimum of two other panel members with significant expertise of FET QA. External membership may be called in to assist in the review and evaluation.
  - All committee members are independent of the matter being investigated and have no conflict of interest.
- The details on the appeals process and timelines will be included in the written communication to the learner.
- The investigation approach and methods steps outlined in [section 3](#) steps 2 to 10 are followed.
- The Academic Investigation Committee have regard for the operational guidelines and terms of reference for conducting appeals.
- The learner is informed of the outcome, in writing, and **within 2 working days**. The notification includes:
  - whether academic misconduct was determined, or not, with a brief reasoning
  - the sanction that will be applied, if appropriate
  - if it will enter the learner's record
  - the decision of the Academic Investigation Committee is final.
- Any corrective and preventive actions can be recommended by the Academic Investigation Committee to the learner, FET centre, or Tipperary ETB's Senior Management Team.
- Tipperary ETB's Senior Management Team are informed of the outcomes and recommendations of the case(s) and QQI are informed of any issues that have potential to impact on the integrity of awards.

## 8. Internal Monitoring and Review of this Procedure

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The FET QA Office is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy and ensuring its compliance with standards and regulations. Monitoring and review is supported by the relevant QA governance groups and informed by stakeholder feedback.

The review schedule is shown on the table on page 2.

## **9. Evidence of Implementation of this Procedure**

Evidence to confirm implementation of this procedure may include, for example:

- Learner induction
- Learner academic awareness training or retraining
- Learner academic skills training or retraining
- Assessor feedback to learner
- Detection and escalation of misconducts
- Investigations, records and reports

## **10. Monitoring of Effectiveness of this Procedure**

The following can be considered when evaluating the effective implementation of this procedure, for example:

- Review and evaluation of staff training and professional development activities
- Review and evaluation of learner information and communications
- Review and evaluation of learner training, workshops
- Review and evaluation of staff resources needed for implementation of academic integrity procedures and misconduct cases
- Review and evaluation of feedback from learners, assessors, teachers, coordinators, investigation teams and ETB's Academic Investigation Committee
- Review and evaluation of academic misconduct allegations, reports and findings
- Analysis of frequency of misconduct types

## Appendix A: Resource to Aid in Detection of Academic Misconduct in Written Work

### Table 1: Resource to Aid Detection of Academic Misconduct in Written Work

Evidence	Why This Can Be Considered Evidence	Limitations of this Evidence	Suggested Types of Questions	Making Sense of the Answer
<p><b>Document properties:</b></p> <p>Strange document properties: eg few minutes of editing time, no author name, author name different from the learner's, or a different author name on each assessment.</p>	<p>If the properties are blank, this means that they could have been intentionally stripped from the document.</p>	<p>If the learner wrote their assessment in Google Docs and then downloaded it to Word to submit, there will be no properties indicated.</p> <p>If the learner doesn't own their computer and must borrow others' computers, the author information might change.</p>	<p>On which platform did you write this assessment? Can you show me?</p> <p>Whose computer did you use?</p> <p>What software did you use? Can you show me?</p> <p>The document properties show the author was X, who is this person?</p> <p>The document properties in this assignment indicate an inconsistency from what you told me earlier (eg short editing time, different software). Can you explain why?</p>	<p>If they answer word or their own computer, it may suggest that they didn't write the assessment themselves.</p> <p>If they answer Google Docs, ask them to show you their Google Docs including all the versions created as they worked on the assessment.</p>
<p><b>Quality of the writing:</b></p> <p>The assessment is "too good to be true" because it is written at a higher level than expected for that individual learner or for learners in that class.</p>	<p>While learners can improve their writing over the course of a term/module, significant improvements from one assessment to another (eg result) or large gaps in understanding between one assessment (out-of-class) and another (in-class) are uncommon.</p>	<p>The learner could have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>worked hard on one assessment making it better than their other assessments</li> <li>had legitimate help on the assessment, or</li> <li>been above the level of the course/higher ability</li> </ol>	<p>I'd like to hear more about your process of writing this assessment...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>and why it differs from your other assessments?</li> <li>Did you talk to anyone else about the assignment when you were researching or writing it? If yes, who, and what did you discuss?</li> <li>Did you write or prepare the assignment with anyone else's</li> </ol>	<p>If the learner cannot describe their process or explain the differences, it may suggest that they did not write the assessment themselves.</p> <p>If they said that they received "help", you will need to probe more about that 'help'. What help was used? What kind of things were done to help (eg translate, rewrite sentences, add material, correct grammar)?</p>

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			<p>help? If yes, who and what help did you receive?          c) Can you show me an earlier draft of your work?          Can you show me the articles you downloaded?</p>	
<p><b>Language or concepts used:</b></p> <p>The language, ideas and/or readings and resources used in the assessment were not covered in class.</p>	<p>In cases of contract cheating, there may be extensive use of materials other than those the learner was directed to use in writing the assignment.</p> <p>In plagiarism cases, the language/phrasing used may be different to what you would expect from the learner. A similarity check software may identify this.</p>	<p>The learner could have studied this topic in another class or on their own.</p>	<p>It's a very interesting topic/theme/angle you chose to explore, how did you go about choosing it?</p> <p>You used the term X in your assignment, what do you understand this term to mean?</p> <p>What websites, search engines, books or other material did you use to research and help you write?</p> <p>What referencing system/style did you use?</p> <p>Where did you find the reference to X source?</p> <p>Did you use a reference manager or bibliographic software? If yes, which one? Can you show me?</p> <p>Can you tell me in your own words what the assignment is about?</p> <p>Can you explain why you didn't use any of the readings assigned to you in this class, choosing instead to only use other sources. Please tell us your process for choosing your</p>	<p>If the learner cannot explain the sources or how they chose them, it may suggest that they didn't write the assessment themselves.</p>

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			sources, including your rationale for doing so.	
<p><b>Unusual word choices:</b></p> <p>The specific word choices used in the assessment are unusual or particularly sophisticated</p>	<p>In assessments provided by contract cheating providers or in materials copied directly from another source, words/ phrases are often used that are not common for the class (because the writer didn't attend the class) or are more sophisticated than expected.</p>	<p>If there is only one assessment as evidence, this could just be indicative of the learner's style.</p>	<p>In the assessment, you used X word(s)/phrase(s) and it was a unique choice or different to what we use in the module.</p> <p>Can you tell me more about that word and how and why you decided to use it?</p>	<p>If the learner cannot define or describe their word choices, or use them again in a sentence, it may suggest that they didn't write the assessment themselves or have copied from other sources.</p>
<p><b>Content not focused on the brief:</b></p> <p>The assessment doesn't address the prompt</p>	<p>If a learner buys a pre-written essay (cheaper than a custom essay), the assessment may not fully address the prompt. Even if it was a custom essay, often contract cheating providers will not fully attend to the assignment brief.</p>	<p>Learners who are struggling academically with the course content could write a assessment that does not address the prompt.</p> <p>If the learner doesn't understand the topic, they may not fully answer the question.</p>	<p>Can you tell me why your address does not address the assignment brief?</p>	<p>If the learner cannot adequately explain to your satisfaction why they wrote an assessment that does not address the brief, it may suggest that the assessment is not entirely their own work.</p>
<p><b>Handwriting:</b></p> <p>The handwriting differs from assessment to assessment</p>	<p>A person's handwriting does not change significantly from occasion to occasion. If the ways in which the person writes the letters in their name, for example, change from one assessment to another, this suggests two different writers.</p>	<p>Perhaps the learner is ambidextrous and wrote one assessment with their left hand and one with their right! (This is definitely not "more likely than not", though)</p> <p>Handwriting may change (eg due to medication)</p>	<p>Please write your name.</p> <p>Can you tell me why your handwriting is so different in these two assessments?</p> <p>Choose a concept from the assessment and ask the learner to explain it.</p>	<p>This piece of evidence may be easy to 'fake', because a learner could practice writing to match the handwriting used in the assessment, or study the concepts ahead of the review.</p>
<p><b>Referencing list, but:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No in-text citations</li> <li>Mismatch with in-text citations</li> <li>Sources inappropriate/ irrelevant</li> <li>Access dates for internet sources predate enrolment</li> </ul>	<p>Commercial 'bespoke' assignments are often produced quickly by (re)using old information from previous jobs. This maximises profit but leads to low quality work. Moreover, learners taking a transactional</p>			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• References are falsified</li> <li>• References do not meet criteria/ requirements:</li> <li>• Min/max required references</li> <li>• Required references/authors</li> <li>• Date range of references</li> <li>• Referencing style</li> <li>• Excludes key content; includes irrelevant content</li> </ul>	<p>approach to learning may only send minimal task information to the cheating service, overlooking important details in the assessment brief. That's why assignments that are only vaguely relevant to the topic or using references to odd sources can be classic signs of contract cheating.</p> <p>Writers may append reference lists without any in-text citations.</p> <p>Writers may copy from a published source but neglect to update their reference list with items cited in the copied text, so in-text citations may not match the reference list.</p> <p>Access dates for internet sources may predate the learner's course enrolment.</p> <p>Some of the references may be false (non-existent) or falsified (don't contain the referenced material).</p>			
<p>Anything else that seems unusual or concerning?</p>	<p>Trust your instincts as an experienced educator. If something see academic integrity decision-maker.</p>			





Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your circumstances during the writing of this assignment?	
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

**Other notes/records/information from assessor, tutor, course, coordinator, interviewers, others**

**Evaluations following investigation**

<b>Academic misconduct has taken place</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Initial classification of misconduct</b>	Level 1 poor practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Level 2 minor misconduct	<input type="checkbox"/>	Level 3 major misconduct	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Initial evaluations – including rationales for classification, considerations applied and proposed sanctions**

## Appendix C: Scoring Matrix for Determining Outcomes of Learner Breaches of Academic Integrity

The following tool can be used to score the misconduct by:

- Calculating the points for the conduct (misconduct) of the learner
- Calculating the points for the context of the misconduct (from each section of the table).
- Adding the points together from the conduct and context.

Next steps: decide the appropriate outcome based on these factors, along with considering all/other mitigating factors

**Example of calculation:**

Points	Learner PLSS ID:
Points for Conduct	
Points for Context: Level of learner	
Points for Context: Previous Misconduct	
Points for Context: Intention to hide breach	
<b>Total Points:</b>	

Conduct by learner (add points from one of the eleven sections)		Points applied depending on seriousness			
		Less serious		More serious	
Plagiarism	1. Up to two plagiarised passages or components constituting up to 5% of the assessment task	2			
	2. As in point 1, but with critical aspects* plagiarised		4		
	3. Up to four plagiarised passages or components constituting up to 20% of the assessment task			6	
	4. As in point 3, but with critical* aspects plagiarised				
	5. Between 20% and 50% of the assessment task plagiarised				
	6. As in point 5 but with critical* aspects plagiarised				8
	7. More than 50% of the assessment task plagiarised				

<b>Contract Cheating</b>	8. Asking someone else to complete all or part of an assignment on the learner's behalf				8	
	9. Offering to write all or part of an assignment for a learner					
	10. Submitting all or part of an assessment item which has been produced for the learner and claiming it as the learner's work					16
	11. Producing all or part of an assignment for a learner 12. Distributing their own assessment work for personal gain, either directly or through a third party, which could facilitate a breach of academic integrity					
<b>Misuse of Artificial Intelligence</b>	13. Submitting all or part of an assessment item which has been produced using artificial intelligence and claiming it as the learner's work			7		
<b>Collusion</b>	14. Up to two passages or components constituting up to 5% of the assessment task	2				
	15. As in point 14 but with collusion in critical* aspects		4			
	16. Up to four passages or components constituting up to 20% of the assessment task					
	17. As in point 16 but with collusion in critical* aspects 18. Between 20% and 50% of the assessment task.			6		
	19. As in point 18 but with collusion in critical* aspects 20. More than 50% of the assessment task				8	
	<b>Non-compliance with assessment or examination instructions or requirements</b>	21. Unauthorised possession of aids or information in examination without use 22. Failure to comply with directions about the assessment or examination (eg speaking during examination, attempting to aid, another learner)	2			
23. Unauthorised aids or information used in examination 24. Aiding another learner 25. Spoken or other communication between learner and any unauthorised person during the examination related to the content of the examination				6		

	26. Providing a copy of exam questions or content, or an assessment task that is to be completed under secure conditions, to another person 27. Providing restricted information to another person relating to assessment without the approval of the examination supervisor or module owner				8	
	28. Receiving restricted information from another person relating to assessment without the approval of the examination supervisor or module owner					16
<b>Impersonation</b>	29. Asking another person to take the learner's place for an examination or other assessment task				8	
	30. Allowing another person to complete the examination or assessment task in the learner's place 31. Impersonating another learner in an examination or assessment task					16
<b>Fraud</b>	32. Creating or providing false documentation, in relation to assessment requirements or deadlines or special consideration, including falsifying assessment task submission receipts and medical certificates				8	
	33. Creating or providing false documentation, in relation to previous results or qualifications					16
<b>Use of file-sharing sites</b>	34. Uploading any content (assessment, notes, slides, etc.) from a module to a third-party site regardless of whether there was any visible benefit to the learner involved		4			
<b>Promoting ways to breach academic integrity</b>	35. Sharing information with other learner about ways to breach academic integrity or facilitating a breach of academic integrity other than through distribution of their own work. (See 12 above)					10
<b>Other breaches of academic integrity</b>	36. Calculated relative to issues of similar significance above	As appropriate (2-16)				

\*Critical aspects are key ideas central to the assessment

Context (add points from all three sections)		Points applied depending on seriousness				
		Less serious			More serious	
Level of Student Experience	37. Learners in the first half of their programme	1				
	38. Learners in the second half of their programme			3		
Previous breaches of academic integrity, allowing for time for appropriate skills development	39. First breach	1				
	40. Second breach				4	
	41. Third or subsequent breach					5
Intention to hide the breach of academic integrity	42. No evidence of deliberate action to hide the breach of academic integrity once the breach had been reported	0				
	43. Evidence of deliberate action to hide a breach of academic integrity in relation once the breach once it had been reported					6

## Appendix D: Outcomes Calculator

	Points	Outcomes
<b>Level of Misconduct</b>		
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>1-4</b>	Completion of academic integrity training and an entry on the Academic Misconduct Register in the centre/programme
	<b>5-8</b>	<p>Completion of academic integrity training, entry on the Academic Misconduct Register and any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero marks in relation to a specific component of assessment task</li> <li>• Assignment marked but with plagiarised sections treated as direct quotes</li> <li>• Resubmit the work for the full range of marks available</li> <li>• Reduction in marks for the assessment by stated amount</li> <li>• Learner repeats and resubmits assessment task</li> </ul> <p>In addition, study skills training is highly recommended.</p>
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<p>Completion of academic integrity training, entry on the Academic Misconduct Register and any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in marks for the assessment by stated amount.</li> <li>• Zero marks in relation to a specific component of assessment task</li> <li>• Learner repeats and resubmits assessment task</li> <li>• Resubmission of the task but with a different topic</li> </ul> <p>In addition, study skills training is highly recommended.</p>
	<b>13-15</b>	<p>Completion of academic integrity training, entry on the Academic Misconduct Register and any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero marks in relation to a specific component of assessment task</li> <li>• Zero marks for the assessment task</li> <li>• Zero marks for the module</li> </ul> <p>In addition, study skills training is highly recommended.</p>
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>16-20</b>	<p>Completion of academic integrity training, entry on the Academic Misconduct Register and any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero marks for the assessment task</li> <li>• Zero marks for the module</li> <li>• Suspension from the programme with an automatic right of return</li> </ul> <p>In addition, study skills training is highly recommended.</p>
	<b>21+</b>	<p>Completion of academic integrity training, entry on the Academic Misconduct Register and any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero marks for the module</li> <li>• Suspension from the programme or ETB for a period with an automatic right of return</li> <li>• Temporary exclusion from the programme</li> <li>• Expulsion from the ETB with no opportunity for readmission</li> <li>• Qualification request withheld</li> </ul> <p>In addition, study skills training is highly recommended.</p>

## Appendix F: Template for Academic Integrity Investigation Report

Academic Investigation Report						
<b>Date of Investigation</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.	<b>Learner PLSS ID</b>				
<b>FET Centre Name</b>						
<b>Module(s) and assessment(s)</b>						
<b>Investigators and their roles. Identify Chair (attendance and signatory)</b>						
<b>Investigation by (tick one)</b>	Centre's Academic Investigation Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tipperary ETB Academic Investigation Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Summary of alleged misconduct						
Evidence and information reviewed by the investigation						
Evaluations and findings of the investigation						
<b>Academic misconduct has taken place</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Classification of misconduct</b>	Level 1 poor practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	Level 2 minor misconduct	<input type="checkbox"/>	Level 3 minor misconduct	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Rationale for decision reached, including considerations</b>						
<b>Sanction</b>						
<b>Additional recommendations arising from the investigation</b>						



## Appendix G: Academic Integrity Sanction - Learner Appeal Form

**Send your appeal form to: [appeals@tipperaryetb.ie](mailto:appeals@tipperaryetb.ie) as soon as possible**

Academic Integrity Sanction - Learner Appeal Form			
<b>Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.	<b>Learner Name</b>	
<b>Learner email AND phone number</b>			
<b>Name of FET Centre</b>			
<b>Name of programme you studied</b>			
<b>Name of module(s) and assessment(s) where academic misconduct was found</b>			
<b>Say why you are appealing?</b>	<b>Tick below</b>	<b>Explain and give detail below</b>	
The investigation procedures were not correctly followed by the Centre-investigation Team, or	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The alleged misconduct was not judged fairly by the investigation process, or	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The decision of my alleged misconduct was not based on correct evidence or information, or	<input type="checkbox"/>		
New evidence or information has become available that was not available at the time of the investigation, or	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The assessment regulations did not cover the circumstances around the misconduct	<input type="checkbox"/>		
The sanction I got is unfair or excessive	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Checklist</b>			
Have you included the letter telling you that academic misconduct was found by the centre's investigation team?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are you available to discuss your case with Tipperary ETB's Academic Integrity Committee?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Give further information, if yes eg days of the week/times of the day, that suit you	

# Appendix H: Academic Misconduct Register

Academic Misconduct Register							
Learner PLSS ID	Date of Finding Misconduct	Module Name	Module Code	Assessment Weighting	Misconduct Detail	Other Relevant Notes	Outcome Assigned Post-Investigation

